Remunerative Price for Groundnut

4142. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether majority of farmers in Andhra Pradesh have stopped cultivating groundnut crop because of lack of remunerative price;

(b) its impact on oil mills; and

(c) how the shortage of groundnut is proposed to be dealt with to ensure that there is no shortage of oil in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, there has been a decline in the area and production of groundnut in the State of Andhra Pradesh, due to drought situation prevailing in the State, during 1999-2000. This would have affected the availability of raw material for the oil mills upto some extent. The groundnut is cultivated in the State of Andhra Pradesh under rainfed conditions and due to scarcity of water, the farmers may have diverted their lands to other remunerative crops.

(c) There is a conspicuous change in consumption trends of oilseeds. Consumption of alternate edible oils like sunflower, palmolein oil, gingelly oil, safflower oil is on the increase and as such there is considerable reduction of pressure on consumption of groundnut oil. Further, the seasonal shortages in the event of fall in production due to drought and other exigencies are obviated by import of oils like palmolein and other oils.

Efforts are also being made to improve the productivity levels by transfer of improved production technologies in groundnut through on Farm Extension Demonstrations under Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP).

Fresh Proposals to Face the Drought in Gujarat

4143. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gujarat is already under severe drought and whether Government have taken any serious attempt to send relief immediately;

(b) whether Government have received any fresh proposals from the States to face the drought situation in the coming months in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir. Two quarterly instalments of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 2000-01 amounting to Rs. 87.42 crore have been released. The Central Government have taken various other measures including issue of instructions by Railways for priority for transportation of fodder and water free of cost, orders for supply of 20 kg. of foodgrains per month to each family at Below Poverty Line (BPL) rates in the affected areas, sanction of 2 kg. per man day at BPL rates under Food for Work Programme and allocation of food-grains to run free community kitchens in the drought affected areas.

(b) and (c) The States of Gujarat and Rajasthan have been severely affected. The Government of Gujarat has informed that a number of works have been started in scarcity areas to employ the labourers on relief works, number of cattle camps/gaushalas/panjrapoles have been opened for looking after cattles, number of fodder depots, have been opened for supply of fodder and action taken for providing water to a number of habitations. The Government of Rajasthan has opened fodder depots for supply of fodder, cattle camps for the benefit of cattle and is providing water in the villages through tankers. The State Government is also reportedly taking steps to prevent migration of labourers by employing them on relief works.

Excess Fruit and Vegetable Production

4144. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO :

SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to set up more Food Processing Industries to utilise excess production of fruits and vegetables and save farmers from fall in prices;

(b) if so, the salient features of the schemes; and

(c) the allocation made and the target for setting up such units ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN) : (a) The Government does not set up food processing industries on its own. The Department of Food Processing Industries provides support to facilitate overall growth of food processing sector. Under its plan schemes, the Department provides Concessional finance to food processing industries. Besides, other agencies like National Horticultural Board